



# Indicators of Intellectual Thinking as Healthy Thinking and Its Relation with Health-Promoting Lifestyle: A New Perspective in Clinical Psychology and Public Health

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## Abstract

**Background:** Quality of life is determined by the lifestyle of individuals. If people have a healthy lifestyle, then they have a higher quality of life. What makes a person's lifestyle is the way he thinks. Therefore, if the thinking is healthy, the person's lifestyle will be healthy, and if the thinking is unhealthy, the person's lifestyle will also be damaged, which will reduce the quality of life.

**Methods:** The research method was mixed method in two quantitative and qualitative phases. The research method in the qualitative phase was customary qualitative content analysis, in which the data analysis process was based on the approach of Granheim and Ladman. In the quantitative phase, the psychometric properties of the research scale were measured. This research was conducted from 2016 to 2021 in Iran. The statistical population in the qualitative section was all scientific texts in the form of articles, books and dissertations that were extracted from scientific databases such as ScienceDirect, PubMed, Elsevier, Ebsco, Sid, Magiran.

**Results:** Indicators of intellectual thinking have been mentioned as research results, which are the main components of the new model of thinking. Moreover, the level of thinking was mentioned and Cognitive distortions, cognitive bias, and perceptual errors were mentioned as sources of harm and error.

**Conclusion:** Intellectual thinking has been mentioned as healthy thinking, which is the main factor of a health promotion lifestyle because healthy lifestyle improves the quality of life of people, which is one of the indicators of public health. Therefore, a higher quality of life can be achieved from the model of healthy thinking, which is a new perspective on promoting public health.

**Keywords:** Intellectual; Model; Health promotion lifestyle; Clinical psychology; Psychotherapy



## Introduction

Public health is defined as the "science and art of disease prevention", increasing longevity and improving the quality of life through organized effort and the conscious choice of communities, organizations, communities and individuals (1). Therefore, quality of life is an important factor in promoting public health. Quality of life is determined by the lifestyle of individuals (2). If people have a healthy lifestyle, then they have a higher quality of life (3). However, how is lifestyle health determined? What makes a person's lifestyle is the way he thinks (4). Thinking allows people to form a sense of, decipher, represent or show the world they involvement, and to create expectations approximately that world. It is subsequently accommodating to an organism with needs, destinations, and wants because it makes plans or something else endeavors to achieve those objectives (5). Therefore, if the thinking is healthy, the person's lifestyle will be healthy, and if the thinking is unhealthy, the person's lifestyle will also be damaged, which will reduce the quality of life. Healthy thinking has indicators and in the present study, a type of healthy thinking model is proposed. This type of thinking model states that all human beings have powers within them that can grow, which are referred to as the faculties of the soul. The level of thinking of individuals is determined by the level of faculties of each person's soul (6). The lowest level of sensory perception and the highest level of intellectual perception. As one grows from the level of sensory thinking to the level of intellectual thinking, the sources of thought error decrease and the health of thinking increases. Therefore, the introduction of a healthy thinking model to determine a health-promoting lifestyle can be a new perspective on public health.

### *Health-Promoting Lifestyle, Thinking and Mental Health*

One of the components of a healthy life is attending to mental health and healthy thinking, which can reduce harmful behaviors (7,

8), thus the connection between thinking and mental health is very important (9). As part of a project titled Positive Thinking and Healthy Living, academics were requested to examine the issue of "thinking" and focus the themes of their papers on thinking and its relationship to health in 2019 (10). As represented in health psychology and positive psychology, mental health, particularly mental health, is believed to be dependent on how individuals think. The person's feelings and actions are likewise healthy if it is healthy. Since we expect the greatest things in life and are prepared to deal with any situation when we are mentally healthy, these individuals are satisfied with themselves and others, and they are responsible in their work environment and relationships. Examining the features of mental wellbeing can indeed help us reach a healthy and cheerful spirit (11, 12). Human happiness depends on good mental health. Getting good mental well-being is not a function of chance; it is the result of putting in time and effort in the right direction. Good and enjoyable thoughts are also important for mental wellbeing (13,14). Our endeavors to protect the public's health do indeed depend on our thinking styles (15). Because general health is one of the indicators of mental health. People with higher mental health also have healthier thinking styles. These people have the least error in thinking (16).

One of the important points in the discussion of health is that healthy people have healthy individual and social functioning and a healthy lifestyle, which is referred to as a health-promoting lifestyle (17). It is a lifestyle that promotes better social functioning (18). This style, as its title suggests, promotes growth and prosperity (19). A health-promoting lifestyle is a concept that includes the following dimensions: "physical activity", "nutrition", "health responsibility", "mental development", "interpersonal relationships" and "stress management"(20).

## Methods

The research method was mixed into two quantitative and qualitative phases. The research method in the qualitative phase was customary qualitative content analysis, in which the data analysis process was based on the approach of Granheim and Ladman (2004). In the quantitative phase, the psychometric properties of the research scale were measured. The statistical population in the qualitative section was all scientific texts in the form of articles, books and dissertations that were extracted from scientific databases such as ScienceDirect, PubMed, Elsevier, EBSCO, SID, Magiran.

The search strategy included four databases (PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus and Scholar google) including books, articles, national and international reports and theses. Inclusion criteria involved empirical human studies published in peer-reviewed journals, written in English, Persian and Arabic, and dated 2000-2020 and dated 1980–2020. In these studies, we report all measures, manipulations and exclusions. Sample size was determined before any data analysis. The search strategy followed a stepwise protocol starting with tree key search terms: “Thinking”, “Soul”, “Lifestyle”, “Clinical Psychology” in the content. Next, the search was narrowed to “Thinking” in the title (exact term) and lastly “Soul” and “Health” (exact terms) in title or abstract or content in combination with model in the title (exact term). Exclusion criteria were applied to eliminate non-peer-reviewed publications, other languages, irrelevant data and off-topic papers.

### *Ethical Approval*

Principles of research ethics have been observed in the article and are registered with the code of

ethics IR3138588 in the Behavioral Sciences Research Center, Life Style Institute, Baqiyatallah University of Medical Sciences.

## Results

### *Indicators of Intellectual Thinking*

Based on content analysis from scientific sources, indicators of rational thinking in accordance with psychological and philosophical theories about thinking and the powers of the soul were extracted (Table 1).

### *Thinking Levels*

The capacities of the soul-based level of thinking were determined through content analysis. As a result, intellectual thinking is at the greatest level, while sensory thinking is at the lowest.

### *Sensory Thinking*

Sensory thinking is limited to sensations and is dependent on external senses. Sensory thinking is one-dimensional, and it is impossible to explore and analyze all of its dimensions in a single subject. People who think in sensory terms frequently come to regret their judgments (10).

### *Intellectual Thinking*

The intellectual thinker is dealing with two facts: material and metamaterial facts. According to quantum physic, when we leave the reality of the body, we join other realities, which we call the immaterial dimensions of man. This mode of thinking encompasses more than just sensory data; it also incorporates meta-knowledge, meta-physical, and spiritual elements. Therefore, it is a higher level than sensory thinking, which we call the level of rational thinking (11).

**Table 1:** Indicators of Intellectual Thinking

<i>Levels of Thinking</i>	<i>Component</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Explain</i>
Intellectual Thinking	Multidimensional Perception	Metamaterial perception	Understanding the immaterial dimensions of phenomena
		Theorizing	Ability to generate concepts and generate meanings
	Analytical Perception	Understanding causality	Finding the cause and understanding of causation for phenomena
		Correct judgment	Comprehensive judgment with reflection
		Scientific principles Targeting	Learning new sciences and ways of thinking setting a goal with deep reflection and thinking
	Conscious Perception	Recognizing the benefits and disadvantages	Reason is one of the soul faculties that can be used to distinguish between good and bad.
		Conscience	Understanding things beyond the law
		Emotional Management	Mastery of emotions and control of impulsive behaviors
		Deterrence	Reason has the power to prevent undesirable things
	Perception of Perfection	Conceptualization	Conceptualization is possible in intellectual perception
Cultivate critical power		The ability to think critically is one of the functions of rational thinking	
Cultivation of intellect: optimal thinking		Intellectual perception triggers the kind of thinking that has the least error	
Breadth of thought self-assessment		Intellectual perception is not limited but broad and wide Self-Assessment and Self-Awareness Are Among the Functions of Intellectual Perception	

***Intellectual Thinking as a Model of Healthy Thinking***

Because of the significance of health, as well as the debate of thinking in psychology and philosophy, and the opinions of many experts in this area, no paradigm of the connection between "thinking and health" has been published before, and this paradigm is offered for the first time. The new model of thinking given in this study is free of the voids and flaws that occur in existing models of thinking throughout the world, and it is built straightforwardly and completely. The

faculties of the soul, according to this style of thinking paradigm, are powers that all human beings have inside them that may increase. Individuals' thinking abilities are determined by the level of their soul capacities. Sensory perception is the lowest degree, while intellectual perception is the highest. The more a person grows from the level of sensory thinking to the level of intellectual thinking, the sources of thought error decrease and the better the health of the thinking.

This is a philosophical-psychological model based on theories of psychology and philosophy. In

which indicators of intellectual deviation have been extracted from theories and texts of psychology and philosophy.

In this model, when a person's level of thinking improves from sensory to intellectual, the person becomes more mentally healthy and his lifestyle becomes healthier.

There are several concepts in this model:

### ***The nature of thinking***

Explains the concept, nature and essence of thinking.

### ***Levels of thinking***

Determines how many levels of thinking there are and what levels of existence each of these levels is associated with.

### ***Sources of Error in Thinking***

Thought is often subject to cognitive distortions, cognitive bias, and perceptual errors, which are all causes of error that lead to thought errors and deviations.

### ***Cognitive Distortions***

Cognitive distortion is essentially a way of persuading our intellect about something that is not true. These misconceptions are used as a rule to reinforce negative emotions or feelings - we tell ourselves things that we think are logical and accurate, but are, in fact, distorted facts (21).

The Most Common Cognitive Distortions are Filtering, Polarized Thinking ("Black and White" Thinking), Overgeneralization, Catastrophizing thinking, Personalization, Global Labeling.

### ***Cognitive Bias***

A cognitive bias is a systematic error in thinking that may be an efficient mistake in considering what happens when people are handling and

translating data within the world around them and influences the choices and judgments that they make. They are mental errors that systematically lead to wrong attitudes, illusions, or beliefs and affect people's decision-making, reasoning, evaluation, recall, perception, and cognition.

These errors include 3 categories: Belief, decision-making and behavioral biases, social biases, memory errors and biases.

### ***Perceptual Errors***

If there is a discrepancy between the information one receives from one's surroundings and what exists, the person will have a perceptual error. Of course, the error of perception should not be confused with illusion (22). Types of perceptual errors: "Stereotyped approach", "The Halo Error", "Perceptual Defense", "Selective Perception" and "Projection" (23).

### ***Healthy Thinking***

Healthy thinking entails considering all aspects of a case, including the positive, negative, and neutral aspects, before concluding (24). Indeed, thought can be both negative and beneficial. It is healthy and otherwise dangerous when the mind is free of cognitive distortions, cognitive bias, and perceptual errors. According to the current study's proposed model, thought has levels that have different attitudes and behaviors depending on the person's level of thinking, and in reality, a person's action is derived from his attitude, which also defines the type of attitude, the level of thinking. Errors and deviations of thought are inevitable. The fewer sources of error and the healthier the mind, the higher the levels of thought. So that the sources of error are removed in the final stage of thought, referred to as "Wisdom" or "Intellectual Thinking," and the individual achieves healthy thinking (Fig. 1).

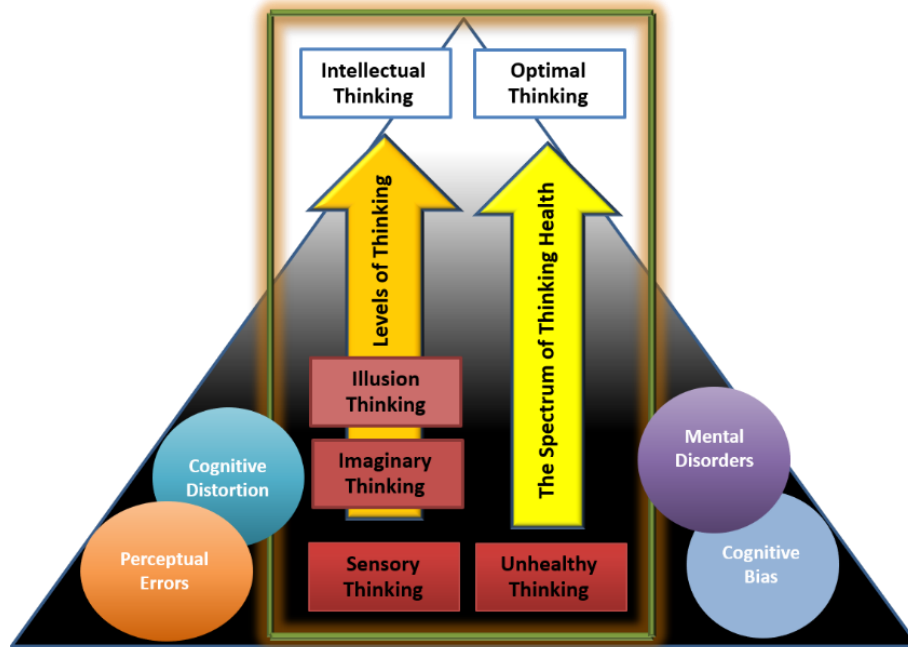


Fig. 1: Optimal Thinking Model

### Points

1. Levels of thinking are directly connected to the mental health spectrum. The greater the mental health, the higher the levels of thinking. Sensory thinking, imaginary thinking, illusion thinking, and intellectual thinking are the four levels of thinking.
2. There are a variety of sources of inaccuracy and thought harm that is inversely associated with thinking levels (the less harm done to the mind, the higher the levels of thinking.)
3. The color black denotes damage and chaos, whereas white denotes health (As shown in the figure, sensory thinking is in the most prominent condition, and its color diminishes as the levels of thinking progress, indicating that the intensity of the harm and the number of errors of thought reduce). Indeed, if we take damage to be darkness and health to be light, the intellectual journey from darkness to lighting is the move from darkness to lighting, from chaos to well-being.
4. A triangle, spanning from black to white, represents a person's lifestyle. In other words, the further a person gets from lifestyle errors and harms, the closer he or she comes to health, to

- the degree that a person's lifestyle is healthy on an intellectual level.
5. A healthy mindset and a healthy lifestyle are inextricably interlinked.
6. Error and damage sources are always present and interconnected around the individual.
7. The color black represents the range of damage and disarray. (The darker it gets, the more mental mistakes and mental illness there are.)
8. A person's nurturing and growth are linked to their health-conscious lifestyle and intellectual capability.

### Discussion

One of the important topics in clinical psychology and public health is the issue of quality of life. In this study, we introduced the method of improving the quality of life by improving lifestyle, which is a new perspective in promoting public health in the world. We mentioned that what leads to a healthy lifestyle is healthy thinking. Therefore, we examined and analyzed the levels of thinking and extracted the indicators of intel-

lectual thinking. Today, the world is looking for a healthy thinking model for a healthy life (10).

In the discussion of health, especially mental health, the type of thinking and beliefs of the individual have always been discussed. Because of the better and more intellectual the level of thinking, the healthier the person's lifestyle and the greater the person's mental health (7).

Therefore, in the present study, a new model of thinking based on the levels of intellectual thinking was introduced. The results of this study can be used to assess the levels of sensory and intellectual thinking as well as to assess the type of thinking of the individual for treatment and education. Each person's way of thinking determines their lifestyle. Lifestyles that lead to excellence and health with lifestyles that lead to harm will be related and identifiable by the type of levels of thinking which will ultimately be effective in changing human behavior and improving performance (25-30).

Thinking can be injured and it can also be healthy. Cognitive distortions, cognitive bias, and perceptual errors were discussed as sources of harm and error. Moreover, according to the proposed model of the present study thought has levels that have different attitudes and behaviors according to the level of thinking and in fact, his action is derived from his attitude, the type of attitude also determines the level of thinking. The thought is always subject to error and deviation. The higher the levels of thinking, the fewer sources of error and the healthier the mind. As mentioned, sources of error include cognitive distortions and cognitive bias, and perceptual errors. Thus, in the last level of thinking, which is called reason, the sources of error are eliminated and the person achieves healthy thinking.

As a person's level of thinking gradually increases from sensory to intellectual thinking, so does their health-promoting lifestyles, as a result, people in society have a healthy lifestyle that promotes public health in the world. In addition, what has been suggested in research related to the level of intellectual thinking are creativity (31), emotional intelligence (32, 33), individual

general knowledge level (34), and organized learning (35), business success (36), emotion management (37-40) and happiness (41, 42).

## **Conclusion**

This research can pave the way for the development of the concept of public health because it creates a new perspective on this concept. Moreover, the results of this research can be used in psychotherapy in clinical psychology. Today, thinking and especially healthy thinking had a very effective role in mental health and health promotion lifestyle and are involved in reducing psychological disorders. People do not want to suffer from physical and mental illnesses and experience a low quality of life but the problem is with their dysfunctional thinking and lifestyle. Many people are not able to give up the unhealthy lifestyle because they have sensory thinking and cannot take into account all aspects of the phenomena, so the sources of mental error are abundant in them. Because this unhealthy way of thinking and living has developed over the years, it is difficult to put it aside. The results of this study are a model for healthy thinking that can lead to a healthy lifestyle in people and therefore, by improving the quality of life of people in communities, promotes public health in the world.

## **Journalism Ethics considerations**

Ethical issues (Including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, redundancy, etc.) have been completely observed by the authors.

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## Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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